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ABSTRACT

Adult native speakers of Hebrew, English-speaking learners of Hebrew, and an additional group of native English speakers were administered a discourse-completion test. Results indicate that to some extent speech-act realization in interlanguage benefits from the activation of a non language-specific pragmatic competence. Conformity to the conventions of use in the native or target language was not necessarily in evidence, and subjects often realized a speech act in the target language by a strategy that differed from both conventions. Learners were shown to violate social norms in the target language by deviating from the preferred speech acts of native speakers, often by choosing less direct formulations. An analysis of deviations reveals that pragmatic competence and the level of linguistic competence interact with second language acquisition processes in determining speech-act realization in the interlanguage. This research supports the position that comparable speech act strategies across languages differ on several dimensions, such as speech act procedure, linguistic realization, potential pragmatic force, and social appropriateness rules. As a result, second language learners often fail to realize their communicative act in the target language both in terms of social appropriateness and pragmatic effectiveness. (JB)

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Learning to say what you mean in a second language; a study of the speech act performance of learners of Hebrew as a second language.*

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June, 1980.

1.0 Introduction

Consider the following dialogue - associated questions, taken from a textbook designed for fourth grade children:

Mrs. Peters: What a lovely dress you are wearing!... Do you mind if I ask where you bought it?

Mrs. Johnson: I found it at half price at a department store.

Why did Mrs. Peters ask Mrs. Johnson where she bought the dress/

(1) She wanted to buy one just like it
(2) She was showing that she liked the dress
(3) She wanted to know where to find nice dresses.

(Around the Corner; p. 46)

The nine year old who was assigned this task chose (2) as the correct answer. Why did he prefer (2) to the other alternatives? Obviously, he could not have found the 'correct' answer in the text. By choosing (2), he showed that he knows how to interpret the communicative functions of utterances in context, even when this function is merely one of 'making conversation.' The child must have known that communicative functions do not always match linguistic content and that sometimes certain formulaic expressions like 'do you mind' do not have to be interpreted literally. World knowledge, linguistic knowledge and awareness of conversational rules all play a part in the process of the interpretation here. The textbook writer assumed correctly that fourth graders, in their native language, have reached the level of communicative competence necessary for inferring unstated communicative functions. Would this text present difficulties to a non-native speaker of English? What does a non-native speaker have to learn about English to accept (2) as a possible

interpretation? What part is played by world knowledge acquired with the first language? The study reported here addressed itself to these questions by examining one aspect in the development of communicative competence in a second language, the interpretation andperforming of speech acts.

The emphasis in second language teaching and learning theories has shifted in recent years from a 'grammatical' or 'structural' approach to a 'communicative' one. (Widdowson: 1978, Canale and Swain 1980). The same shift is also apparent in studies of first language acquisition. (Halliday 1975, Ervin Tripl and Mitchell Kernan 1977). This shift reflects the generally shared assumption by all 'communicative approach' studies that grammatical knowledge is not enough to account for all the knowledge required to use a language.

The notion of "communicative competence" was first introduced by Hymes (1967), who used the term to describe the underlying knowledge required to use language effectively and appropriately in context.

> The acquisition of competence for use, indeed, can be stated in the same terms as acquisition of competence for grammar. Within the developmental matrix in which knowledge of the sentences of a language is acquired, children also acquire knowledge of a set of ways in which sentences are used. From a finite experience of speech acts and their interdependence with socio-cultural features they develop a general theory of the speaking appropriate to their community, which they employ, like other forms of tacit cultural knowledge (competence) in conducting and interpreting social life.
>
> In sum, the goal of a broad theory of competence can be said to show the ways in which the systematically possible, the feasible, and the appropriate are linked to produce and interpret actually occurring cultural behavior. (Hymes 1972:286)

In this passage Hymes is referring to the development of communicative competence in the native language. From a second language acquisition perspective, the question is how the 'experience with speech acts,' interdependent as it is with sociocultural features, will affect the acquisition of communicative competence in another language.

The study of speech acts (Austin 1962, Searle 1969 1975 1979) views language as a mode of action. A speech act is defined by Searle (1965) as the minimal linguistic unit of communication. The study of speech acts is concerned with specifying the conditions that must obtain for any utterance to 'count as' a particular communicative act. The rules that govern the pragmatic performance of speech acts can range from linguistic context bound rules to context-free rules or to any combination of both. Thus an utterance like 'I'm hungry' can have many functions, depending on context (such as a request to delay going to bed, uttered by a child at bedtime) while an utterance like 'I hereby request you to' will normally count as a request. In order to interpret the intended function of any utterance in context, and to achieve his communicative ends, the speaker must be aware of the interplay between pragmatic and linguistic rules.

The cross-cultural and social aspects of speech act performance have been explored by studies within the framework of the 'ethnography of communication.' This approach, developed mainly by Gumperz and Hymes, has emphasized the differences between societies in verbal interaction (Gumperz 1964) and pointed to

these differences as one possible source of misunderstanding between speakers from different ethnic and cultural backgrounds (Gumperz and Tannen, 1979).

In this paper I will focus on the contribution of speech-act theory to our understanding of second language acquisition andpresent empirical evidence to show the difficulties involved in acquiring the communicative competence needed to realize speech-acts in a second language.

1.1 Cross-cultural differences

The difficulties second language learners face in achieving communicative competence in the target language might stem from differences between languages and cultures in various aspects of speech-act realization.[1] For example:

a) Social appropriateness

As Hymes (1972) has observed, one of the things a child has to learn, as part of developing communicative competence, are the social rules that determine when to speak and when to be silent. Cultures might differ considerably in the ways these rules operate across speech-events and for different members of the society. Thus for example, some cultures value silence in children, while others encourage children to engage in child-adult conversation.

Luo children in Kenya (Blount 1970) are not allowed to participate in adult social gatherings, except ritually: children are generally encouraged to stay near adults, and not to speak in front of strangers. In middle class American Jewish families, on

the other hand, children are often encouraged to display their verbal abilities before admiring adult friends and relatives.

Among the Araucanians in Chile, the ideal man is a good orator who is expected to exercise his skills at every opportunity, while the ideal woman is expected to be silent on all social occasions (Coulthard 1977). Transference of rules and expectations from one culture to another can create confusion, embarrassment and misunderstanding.

The ritual nature of speech on social occasions might be another aspect of speech-act realization that is not shared across cultures. The rituals of American leave-taking ('Thank you for coming,' 'It was nice of you to come' 'It was nice having you' for example,) sound strange to Israelis living in the States, since there are no equivalents to these formulas in Hebrew.

Cultures may also differ in the degree of directness tolerated in the realization of speech-acts. Speech-act patterns that are perfectly acceptable in one culture might be often considered offensive in another, and vice versa. In Israel, for example, complaints about the cost of living at middle class social gatherings are often illustrated by specific references to personal income, followed by inquiries about the salaries of others present. Such inquiries would not probably be too well received in a similar American social gathering. Although two languages might possess a similar range of linguistic patterns for any given speech-act, the conventions of directness for the use of the pattern might differ from culture to culture. Thus, both Hebrew and English have direct and indirect ways of making requests, but in any given context Hebrew

rules of politeness can allow for a degree of directness that might be considered rude if transferred to American English.

b) Linguistic realization

As has been pointed out by Searle (1975) two languages might possess equivalent, idiomatic standard forms for the performance of indirect speech-acts, but the use of the form in each language may be governed by different conventions of use.

A speaker of Hebrew, for example, who wants to have the salt passed at dinner, has available an expression which is formally and functionally equivalent to 'Could you...' in English (i.e., it carries the same potential illocutionary force. However, the most frequent strategy used at dinner tables in Israel is performed by asking about the possibility of getting the salt. ('Efsar leqabel et hamelax?'- 'Is it possible to get the salt?').

Thus, even in cases when the second language learners is aware of the range of possible effective and socially appropriate ways for performing any speech-act, he still has to learn which form is the most acceptable[2] in which situation.

The potential range of procedures available for the performance of speech acts in one language might include forms that have no equivalent in the other. For example, Hebrew has no direct equivalent to English requests introduced by 'willingness' or 'prediction' questions ('Will you do it?').[3] On the other hand,

suggesting the possibility of a future action is a standard procedure for introducing requests in Hebrew. ('Maybe you'll do it?'). Both in Hebrew and English one can make an indirect request by questioning the hearer's ability to do the act. In Hebrew, but not in English, the request can be introduced by forms meaning 'Are you ready?' or 'Are you interested?' In Hungarian, the verb frequently used in indirect requests is a verb of 'knowledge' not ability. ('Tudna segiteni' - 'Do you know to help' meaning 'Can you help?')

c) marking

Each language has specific means whereby speakers can signal to their hearers the intended illocutionary force of their utterances.

Some of these linguistic devices may have no translation equivalent in another language and even if they do, they often don't carry the same illocutionary force. For example, the word "hare" in Hebrew, which has no formal translation equivalent in English, can be used to indicate to the hearer that the speaker is reasserting a shared assumption. ('Hu hare lo mevin - 'He does not understand, as you and I well know.')

d) Mitigating and aggravating

Mitigation is defined by Fraser (1978) as "the intentional softening or easing of the force of the message - a modulation of the basic message intended by the speaker." The linguistic means available for mitigating an act or for aggravating it (modulating it in the opposite way) might be also language specific. For example, Hebrew has no syntactic equivalent to English 'tag questions' which are often used to mitigate requests ('You'll do it,

won't you?'). On the other hand, one can aggravate a request in Hebrew by putting the stress on an initial 'perhaps' ('Perhaps you'll stop?'). Needless to say, intonation has a central role in modulating the illocutionary force of utterances in every language and discrepancies in the use of prosody and paralinguistic cues can lead to the disruption of conversational flow.

2.0 Stating the problem: what are the universal properties of speech-act performance?

The difference between English and Hebrew with regard to the use of speech-act strategies is highlighted by the analysis of one particular group of strategies. The group considered here is that of request-forms.

For any speech-act form to carry the force of a directive it has to satisfy a set of pragmatic preconditions. For imperatives, for example, Labov and Fanshel's (1977;78) Rule of Request lists the following preconditions: the hearers' belief that the speaker believes that there is a need for the action and the request, that the hearer has the ability and obligation to carry it out, and that the speaker has the right to tell the hearer to do so. By applying this rule in context we should be able to distinguish between imperatives that are valid requests and between those that are not. Labov and Fanshel's Rule of Request is defined in purely pragmatic terms: hence, the rule should apply to any language that has imperative forms.

It follows that a second language learners who has acquired the use of imperative forms in the target language should have no difficulty in distinguishing between requests that are valid and those that are not, or in performing directives by the use of imperatives. As we look at other forms for performing requests this, however clear

division between 'pragmatic' and 'linguistic' factors becomes much more complex.

For a contrastive analysis of speech act patterns across languages, I suggest that the following dimensions be taken into account: 1) pragmatic preconditions, 2) the speech-act procedures, 3) the linguistic realization and modulating devices, 4) potential pragmatic force across speech events, 5) social appropriateness rules. For a form of request in the first language to be considered equivalent to a form in the second language, it has to be shown that the two forms share properties on all five dimensions. A close analysis of some request forms in Hebrew and English reveals that this is not always the case. Consider the following examples:

	Hebrew		English
(1)	Ata yaxol lehalvot li...?		Can you lend me....?
	(Can you lend me..)	→	Could you lend me...?
(2)	Ata muxan lehalvot li...?	≠*	Would you lend me..
	(Are you prepared to lend me)		
(3)	Efsar leqabel mimxa halva'a?		Would it be possible to get a loan?
	(Is it possible to get a loan from you)	≠	Can I ask you for a loan?

Only the strategy used in (1) shares both procedure and linguistic realization in Hebrew and English. In both languages, the request is made by questioning the hearer's ability to do the act, and in both the utterance can be interpreted as a request for information i.e., genuinely referring to somebody's ability to do the act.) The lexical item used in Hebrew, 'yaxol' is an exact translation equivalent of English 'can.' In (2), on the

* ≠ signals non-equivalent → signals equivalence

other hand, although in both Hebrew and English some reference is made to the hearer's willingness to do the act (a possibly shared procedure), the linguistic realizations are very different. In (3) the resemblances between the strategies is even more remote. It is a conventional, standard procedure in Hebrew to request an action by asking (in an impersonal form) about the possibility of getting something done, while in English the equivalent, 'Would it be possible to' though possibly functioning as a request, is not a standard request form. In most contexts, the functionally equivalent form to an 'efšar' question in Hebrew would be a 'Can I' question in English.

In addition, each of these three strategies has different modulating devices in the two languages. For example, in Hebrew (1) can be mitigated by prefixing the word 'Ulay' ('Perhaps you can lend me') while in English one can add a tag question. ('You can do it, can't you?') However, the most important point is that even where we have a similar strategy, it does not necessarily carry the same potential force in the same situations across the two languages. In some situations where in English it is both appropriate and effective to use a 'can you' question to make a request, the 'can you' question in Hebrew might be interpreted as a genuine request for information. The last point is linked to considerations of social appropriateness: if one culture allows for more directness in certain situations than the other, as seems to be the case if we compare the Israeli and American cultures, then a similar indirect strategy might loose its effectiveness when transferred from one culture to the other simply because it is not direct enough for the occasion.

At the same time it should also be noticed that in all three examples in both languages the requests are made by indirect means, that all the forms are potentially ambiguous whether they are meant as requests for action or as requests for information, and to be interpreted as requests they all have to fulfill a set of possibly shared pragmatic preconditions. From a second language acquisition perspective, the problem is where to draw the line between the 'universal' (or at least cross-culturally shared) properties of speech act performance, and the language and culture specific ones. A 'universalistic' approach would tend to minimize the difficulties involved in learning to perform speech acts in a second language. This view is expressed by Fraser who claims on the basis of a survey of requesting strategies in 14 languages that:

> The strategies for performing illocutionary acts, and for conveying effects such as intention of politeness, conveying relative deference, and for mitigating the force of the utterance are essentially the same across languages. (Fraser 1978, 33)

On the basis of this 'sameness' Fraser suggests that 'much of the knowledge for conveying a learner's intention need not be taught" (Fraser 1978, 34). In this view, learning to formulate speech acts in a second language is mainly a matter of acquiring the sociolinguistic rules that specify when and how a strategy can be used appropriately.

As I tried to show by the analysis of the three request forms in English and Hebrew, the similarity between strategies across languages holds only as long as the strategies are

compared on the most general level.[4] Once the analysis takes into account more than the general mechanisms involved in realizing the act, the similarities tend to disappear.

The arguments for and against Fraser's first claim might depend on the level of generalization adopted for the analysis. Thus, it is easier to detect 'sameness' on the more general level of procedures than on the level of linguistic realizations, and hence analysts who argue for 'universality' tend to emphasize the former. (See for example, Searle 1975). On the other hand, arguments for and against Fraser's second claim can be substantiated or refuted by evidence from L2 learners' use of the target language. The speech act performance of native speakers in Hebrew and in English, as compared to the performance of second language learners of Hebrew, to be presented here suggests that Fraser's second claim is unsubstantiated. This evidence also raises serious doubts about the validity of claims for speech act 'universality.'

The basic claim argued in the paper is: Comparable speech act strategies across languages might differ on one or more dimensions, such as procedure, linguistic realization potential, pragmatic force and social appropriateness rules. As a result, second language learners might fail to realize their acts in the target language both in terms of social appropriateness and pragmatic effectiveness.

The evidence to support this claim comes from an empirical study designed to elicit speech act forms in Hebrew from native speakers and learners. The research questions for the study were:

1) Do second language learners make use of cross-culturally shared pragmatic rules in interpreting and performing speech acts in the target language? In other words, can we find evidence in learners usage for the psycholinguistic reality of some kind of universal pragmatic competence?

2) Do second language learners violate norms of social appropriateness in

the target language? And if they do, are these violations explainable by transfer of social norms?

3) Do second language learners deviate from native speakers in their use of cross culturally shared and non-shared conventional speech-act procedures? And if they do, what is the nature of these deviations?

3.1 Experimental design

a) Subjects

1) 44 adult learners of Hebrew, all native speakers of English, students in intermediate and advanced Hebrew classes at the University of Michigan, Ann Arbor.[5]

2) 32 adult native speakers of Hebrew, all students at the Hebrew University in Jerusalem.

3) an additional group of 10 adult native speakers of English, all graduate students at the Modern Language Center at The Ontario Institute for Education in Toronto.

b) Instruments

The instrument[6] was a discourse - completion test that included 17 items. Items on this test required the insertion of one utterance in a blank in a dialogue. For example:

Husband and wife

Diane: There's a PTA meeting tonight.

Robert: Are you going?

Diane: I'm exhausted. _____?

Robert: When does it start? I can't be there before eight.

c) Design

The items on the discourse completion test were constructed to elicit:

1) Four directive types. The strategies expected to appear were 1, 2, 3 and 8 on table 1. Each strategy was expected to appear in two of the test items.

2) Two Hebrew speech-act markers. ('davka' and 'bemikre'). These markers were expected to be inserted in the completions for two items on the test.

3) One item (number 16) was constructed to test subjects' interpretation of a speech-act realization governed by a cross-cultural pragmatic, conversational rule.

4) The test included six additional items that required completion by any speech-act other than a directive. The full (English) version of the test is presented in Appendix A.

d) Procedures INSERT TABLE I HERE

The original Hebrew version of the discourse-completion test was administered to the group of native speakers (in Israel), and to the group of learners of Hebrew. An English version of the test was administered to the group of native speakers of English.

To rule out the possibility of reading problems interfering with comprehension and to ensure that students considered both preceding and following context before responding, the dialogues were read aloud. Subjects listened and read each dialogue before completing it. The instructions for learners of Hebrew as a second language were given in English. Native speakers completed the written version without the dialogues being read to them.

3.2 Results

14a

The speech events depicted by the dialogues in the test can be divided into: 1) standard, institutionalized situations that proved to have fairly common scripts of linguistic behaviour.[7] 2) non-standard situations that did not prove to have such scripts. A further division of the dialogues is between: 1) dialogues that required completion by the use of a direct or indirect directive type, 2) dialogues that required completion by any other speech act.

The following dialogues - 1, 2, 3, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 14, 17 were shown by the results to depict standard situations. Nine of these required a directive. The analysis of directive types used in completing these items identified nine different strategies. The distribution of these strategies across items 11 and 12 are presented in tables 3 and 4. The results for items 4, 5, and 14 are presented in table 2.[8]

The results presented in the above tables show that:

TABLES 1, 2, 3, 4, 5 and 6 here

a) Interrespondent agreement

For any given dialogue in table 1, one strategy was predominant for native speakers. In each dialogue, more than half of the native speakers selected a single directive type. This result indicates that for each situation one speech-act form seems to have a higher probability of occurrence for native speakers than any other. In the same situations, on the average, less than half of the learners used the predominant form selected by the native speakers. Interrespondent agreement among learners in choice of form is always lower than that of native speakers. For items included in table 1, mean of native speakers agreement is 68%, compared to a mean of 42.5% for learners.

Furthermore, learners responses are distributed over more speech act forms than those of native speakers. These results indicate that for any given situation most native speakers consider one form to be more acceptable than others, while learners do not conform to this pattern.

Interrespondent agreement among natives and learners alike was high for two items only: D12 and D14. Both items depicted standard situations with only a limited range of potential acceptable completions. The possible reasons for the agreement between native speakers and learners on these items are discussed in sections 4.1 and 4.2.

b) Distribution patterns

The differences between native speakers' and learners' responses are further evidenced by the distribution of directive types chosen by the two groups for each item (presented in table 1.) An analysis of responses for each item showed that the distribution of directive types among native speakers is significantly different (at p .01 level) from the distribution

of the same directives types among learners. This result was interpreted as indicating a different range of factors affecting choice of speech-act form for each group. (See discussion in sections 4.2 and 4.3).

c) Discrepancies in choice of strategies

In four out of the eight items, D1, D8, D9 and D17, the strategies most frequently chosen by the learners were not the ones most frequently chosen by the native speakers. This result is taken as further evidence for the difference in the range of factors affecting choice in the two groups.

d) Directive types used

The directive types used by native speakers and learners on the test were divided into the following groups:

1) Strategies that are similar in English and Hebrew both in procedure and linguistic realization, e.g., imperatives and 'Can you' questions.

2) Strategies that share a similarity in English and Hebrew but have a different linguistic realization in each, such as; 'willingness' questions. (In Hebrew, 'are you ready/prepared - muxan - to do it?' In English, Would you/are you willing to do it?')

3) Strategies that are Hebrew language specific, such as 'possibility' questions. (Hebrew: 'Is it possible - efšar - to receive.. or 'Is it possible to ask you to do Y?).

An analysis of responses for each of the subjects who completed all the request items with request forms (25 native speakers and 21 learners) showed that strategies from groups 2 and 3 were used less by learners than by native speakers. (See table 6). Though the data are not sufficient to show that the differences

between native speakers and learners in the use of these strategies are statistically significant, it should be noted that the differences are smaller when the strategies involved are from group 1 (imperatives and 'can you questions) and greater when they involve certain strategies from groups 2 and 3. (question directives and permission directives).

This result indicates that transfer (in a very specific sense of the term) is one of the factors that affects speech-act realization in interlanguage. A qualitative analysis of the responses of native speakers and learners for each item separately revealed that transfer is only one of the factors that determines learners' choice of speech act forms. An analysis of the factors which were identified is presented in section 4.2 and 4.3.

e) Variation and range

Variation

As can be seen on tables 1, 2 and 3 both groups are sensitive to the differences between the dialogues and modify their responses accordingly. This is shown by the change in the most frequently chosen speech act strategy across dialogues.

Range

The range of directive-types used by each subject - in both groups - exceeded three strategies. The mean number for each native speaker is 5.09 (S.d 91) and for each learner 5.45 (S.d .93).

f) Marking indirect speech-acts

The issue of speech act marking was tested through two items on the test (D4 and D5). Since the utterances used on these items are not comparable to utterances used on other items in the test, the results for these items are presented here in full.

Items D4 and D5 were designed to elicit from native speakers of Hebrew language-specific speech act marking devices and

to check whether learners used these devices. In both discourses the contextually appropriate utterance can be interpreted as carrying an indirect illocutionary force on the basis of context alone. Thus, in D4 the response incorporated in the dialogue signals that any general question about direction of driving is interpreted as a request for a lift. Consider the exchange:

A. Are you going our way?

B. Yes, but I'm afraid the car is full.

It was observed that in Hebrew speakers often mark hints of these kind by adding 'bemikre' ('by any chance') as in the following conversation, translated from Hebrew, that took place between husband and wife:

Wife : Are you going to town today, by any chance?

Husband: What would you like me to get?

Wife: Drinks for the party tonight.

Obviously, the question could have been interpreted as a request on the basis of shared assumptions alone. The addition of 'by any chance' serves to underline the speaker's intention in a way that does not leave room for misunderstanding (or evasion, depending on intent). The results for D4 failed to bring evidence for the frequency of this device in native speech, but did show that learners are not aware of its potential function at all: though only 16% of native speakers marked the question with 'by any chance,' none of the learners did.

In D5 a husband is challenging his wife's announcement that she invited to a party a couple he can't stand. The wife's

response ('because Diana heard about it...') delimited the choice of the subjects in realizing the challenge to some kind of 'why' question. More than half of the native speakers in this case (57%) did mark their intention with phrases like 'Why them of all people?" (using 'davka' an untranslatable Hebrew speech-act marker) or 'Why did you invite them at all?' or the less cohesive, but still coherent 'How could you do it?' Among the learners only one used 'How could you?' while all the others (79%) simply completed with the mild 'Why did you invite them?' The completions for these two items indicate that learners do not share native speakers' judgements as to when and how to mark their speech acts.

4.0 Discussion

The discussion on the three research questions, namely:

1) Do second language learners make use of cross-culturally shared pragmatic rules in interpreting and performing speech-acts in the target language? In other words, can we find evidence in learners usage for the pscholinguistic reality of some kind of pragmatic competence? (section 4.1).

2) Do second language learners violate norms of social appropriateness in the target language? And if they do, are these violations explainable by transfer of social norms? (section 4.2)

3) Do second language learners deviate from native speakers in their use of cross-culturally shared and non-shared speech act strategies? And if they do, what is the nature of these deviations? (section 4.3)

4.1. Evidence for the use of cross-culturally shared pragmatic rules.

The analysis of the learners performance in the study suggests that to some extent speech-act realization in interlanguage benefits from the activation of a non-language specific pragmatic competence.[9] The following results are interpreted as supporting this point:

a) Variation

The fact that learners choice of strategy varied from dialogue to dialogue in the realization of one speech-act (directives) is interpreted as showing the learners sensitivity to contextual constraints. Learners, as well as native speakers, proved to be sensitive to the setting and interpersonal relationships suggested by each dialogue, and modified their responses accordingly. This sensitivity is probably non-language specific. The learners seem to transfer to the target language a general pragmatic competence. On the basis of this competence, the learner looks for linguistic ways to adapt his speech act realization to contextual constraints.

b) Range

The range of speech act forms used by learners (mean - 5.09 for directives only) includes both explicit, direct forms such as imperatives) and conventional indirect forms (e.g.,'Could you' questions). This result can again be interpreted as indicating a successful transfer of pragmatic competence from the native language. As part of his general pragmatic competence, acquired with the first language, the speaker knows that certain

speech acts can be realized either directly or indirectly.[10] This information is applied to the target language and facilitates the acquisition and use of indirect forms, especially those that are similar to the mother tongue. It should be noted, though, that the pragmatic competence applied to a second language might facilitate the learning of indirect forms, but does not ensure success in their actual use in context.

c) Contextual appropriateness

Most learners completed the missing speech-acts in the dialogue in contextually (though not necessarily pragmatically) appropriate ways. Native speakers and learners agreed to a great extent on the communicative function of the utterance required in each given context. (The mean of contextually appropriate answers for native speakers was 97%, for learners 89%). This result, besides indicating the learners' level of reading comprehension, is important in showing that the interpretations given by learners to the dialogues do not differ substantially from those of native speakers. The learners' level of proficiency in Hebrew and their general pragmatic competence enabled them to agree with native speakers on the kind of linguistic behaviour expected in each of the situations presented in the test.

d) Cross-culturally shared conversational rules

In one case, learners agreed with native speakers not only on the communicative intent required by the context, but also the actual realization of the act. This case (D16, see appendix A) tested the cross-cultural validity of a conversational rule that is based on the violation of Grice's maxim of relation. (Grice 1975, 47)

The second speaker in D16 begins his answer to a question 'Is he not nice?' by another question - 'Not nice? I think he is...' This question is inappropriate as an answer unless it implies some kind of disagreement. Accordingly, most respondents (90% of native speakers and 85% of learners) interpreted the question as implying disagreement with the proposition implied by the first question and completed the utterance with an emphatic statement like 'Not nice? I think he's great.' The agreement between native speakers and learners in this case shows that the ability to draw conversational implications is part of the pragmatic competence transferred to the target language.

4.2 Violation of social appropriateness norms in the target language

As discussed in section 1.2, for any speech act form to be considered equivalent in two languages, it has to be shown that the two realizations of the form share properties on at least the five dimensions identified. One of the five dimensions consists of the social appropriateness rules that govern the choice of form in context. The issue of social appropriateness in realizing speech acts in a second language involves problems like cross-cultural differences as to when to realize the act, problems of sequencing and appropriacy, the degree of directness allowed in each culture, and the conventions of use that govern the choice of specific forms in context. The nature of the test used in this study allows for an analysis of the degree of adaptability of second language learners to target language and culture social appropriateness rules from two aspects only: 1) conformity or deviation from conventions of use, 2) degree of

directness in realizing the act. Since social appropriateness rules relate linguistic behaviour to properties inherent in the speech-event (such as setting, participants, interpersonal relationships, etc.) the results discussed in this section are based on a cross-cultural analysis of the speech events represented by the dialogues in the test, and the nature of subjects responses to the dialogues in the light of this analysis.

1) The conformity or deviation of second language learners from target language conventions of use.

As can be seen in table 1, the distribution of learners responses for each item differed significantly from that of native speakers. We interpreted this result to mean that in any given context learners might deviate from the usage of native speakers at least by realizing their speech-act by a form which is not the one most frequently used by native speakers (see section 4.0) or by a form which is not the one judged to be the most acceptable by native speakers (see footnote 2).

If we compare the responses of learners to both the responses of native speakers of English and to the responses of native speakers of Hebrew, we should be able to judge which set of acceptability norms dominates interlanguage use - native language norms or target language norms. The results indicate that as a rule neither can be expected. This point is best illustrated by the distribution of responses for an item which initially was not considered to represent an institutionalized situation. In the situation represented in D6, a mother is telling her son to get a haircut. As can be seen by example (4), the learners' choice of speech act form deviates in this case from both native and target language usage:

(4) Higia hazman šetistaper

(Its time (that) you got a haircut)(HL1* 75%)

(5) Ata çarix lehistaper

(You have to get a haircut)(HL2 52%)

(6) Why don't you get a haircut? (EL1 7)

The level of agreement on choice of form among native speakers of Hebrew in this case is surprisingly high. The 'time referant' hint (4) was used by 75%, while the most frequently used strategy among learners was an 'obligation' statement like (5). Native speakers of English on the English version of the test used (6) as the most frequent strategy. Since the strategies realized in (4) and (6) were used by learners on other items in the test, the preference of the learners for (4) cannot be explained by lack of linguistic means. The examples illustrate that in any given situation, learners might realize a speech act in the target language by a strategy that differs from both the one they would use in their native language and the one preferred by native speakers of the target language.

2) Degree of directness

On the basis of the generally acknowledged differences between the 'speech ethos' of Hebrew and that of English, it was assumed that when asked to realize a directive in Hebrew, will tend to choose a less direct form from the one agreed on by native speakers of Hebrew.

A tendency on the part of learners to be less direct would be interpreted as evidence for transfer of social norms.
The results show that the interlanguage of speech act realiz-

*HL1 Hebrew as a first language. HL2 Hebrew as a second language
EL1 English as a first language.

ation is clearly influenced by transfer of social norms from the first language and culture, but that this factor interacts with second language learning acquisition processes in determining the speech act realization of the learners.

This point is illustrated by the distribution of responses to items that represent speech events governed cross-culturally either by shared or non-shared rules of directness. The policeman incident depicted in D2 was believed to be governed by specific culture bound social norms. Israeli policemen are known to be notoriously direct and impolite while their North American counterparts, at least in Canada, were believed to be much less direct. The distribution of responses (see table 1) shows that most native speakers expect an Israeli policeman to make an explicit, direct demand while learners are divided between those that conform to this expectation and those that expect an implicit obligation statement or a hint.[11)]

7) Taziz et hamxonit
(Move thie car) (HL1 78%)

8) Carix lehaziz et hamxonit
(The car should be moved) (HL2 25%)

9) Its a no stopping zone (EL1 7)

Furthermore, native speakers who used obligation statements (16%) like example 6, preferred the personal more direct 'ata' construction ('You should move the car.') Learners' hesitation in an Israeli policeman issue a direct command is taken as evidence

for transfer of social norms.

Transfer of social norms in degree of directness is also apparent in the responses to D14. It was observed that in asking directions from a stranger on the street, the standard procedure for English is an 'attention getter' ('Excuse me...') and the form 'Can you..' 'Could you tell me ..?' The indirect request form in this case is highly formalized and can be considered a speech act marker of politeness. The alternative more direct option available to the speaker in this case is to follow the 'attention getter' with the question ('How do I get to X?'). The form 'Can you tell me' has a formal translation equivalent in Hebrew, but is only rarely used in asking for directions. The completions of native speakers confirmed this observation about Hebrew. Except one, all Israelis completed this item by a direct request for information ('Where is the railway station?')

All native speakers of English (on the English version) used as expected, the phrase - 'Could you tell me please how to ...?' The responses of learners were divided. Most learners (82%) conformed to target language norms and used the direct request for information used by native speakers, but some did transfer the politeness formulas from English:

(10) Ata yaxol lehagid li bvakasa ex lehagia letaxanat harakevet? (HL2 18%)

A speaker who utters the over-elaborated (10) in Israel would most probably be recognized immediately as a non-native speaker of Hebrew. The fact that most learners avoided (10) might be

due to a communication strategy of simplification. In the absence of sophisticated linguistic means or hesitation about the appropriacy of available means, the learner opts for the most direct, transparent strategy available. This explanation is consistent with the results for another item on the test. In asking for a menu in the restaurant (D1) most native speakers of Hebrew used an indirect strategy ("is it possible to receive the menu" 76%) while the most frequent strategy used by learners was a direct imperative ("Bring us the menu" 42%).

The completions of D14 and D1 show how transfer of social norms can interact with a second language acquisition process.[12] (simplification) in influencing the choice of strategy by learners. Nevertheless, a trend towards'less-directness' seems to be dominant in learners' realizations. The last example of this trend is the completions of learners and native speakers to an item (D8) which depicted a speech event believed to be governed by shared norms of directness in both American and Israeli cultures. In completing the dialogue in D8 (girl trying to get rid of stranger on the street) neither native speakers of English (in English) nor those of Hebrew (in Hebrew) hesitate to express bluntness:

(11) Ulay ta'azov oti bimnuxa?
(Perhaps you'll leave me alone?) (HL1 19%)

(12) Ta'azov oti bimnuxa?
(Leave me alone) (HL1 47%)

(13) Get lost! (E11 7%)

The strategy used in (11) is a Hebrew aggravated version of an imperative.[13] This form was not used by any of the learners, who probably were not aware of the aggravating function of Hebrew 'Ulay' (perhaps). But learners did not even use imperatives like (12) or (13), though they were certainly familiar with them. Most learners preferred general, indirect hints of the kind:

(14) Ani lo roca ledaber itxa
(I don't want to talk to you) (HL2 79%)

The preference of learners for 'less-directness' in this case might be partly due to lack of linguistic means. (When asked, students in the pilot study admitted that they did not know how to say 'get lost' in Hebrew). But, since all learners could have used an imperative, as some did, 'telex mimeni' -('Go away from me') the trend for less-directness cannot be fully explained this way. The only explanation that seems pausible is that there is probably more hesitation involved with expressing emotions like anger directly in a language other than your own, and learners responses reflected this hesitation.

The discussion in this section can be summarized as follows:

a) Learners violate social norms in the target language by deviating from the preferences of native speakers in choice of speech act strategies for any given context.

b) Learners' choices do not systematically conform to either first or second language acceptability patterns.

c) Learners' choices of strategies reveal a tendency to be <u>less direct</u> than native speakers. This is probably partly due to transfer of social norms,[14] but in some cases it may be due to reluctance on part of the speaker to express emotion directly in a language over which he does not have full control.

4.3 <u>The interlanguage of speech-act performance</u>

As has been shown (sections 4.0 and 4.1) L2 learners deviate systematically from native speakers in their choice of speech act strategies. (See also research question(3), p.19). An analysis of the nature of these deviations reveals that pragmatic competence and the level of linguistic competence interact with 2nd language acquisition processes in determining speech-act realization in the interlanguage. One such case of

interaction was the interaction between transfer of social norms and simplification as discussed in the last section. The discussion in section 4.2 was based on an analysis of the distribution of responses for specific items; the analysis presented in this section is based on a comparative analysis of strategies across items. It was felt that for this analysis all responses should be considered since any deviant use by a learner might be an indicator of a more general trend. Nevertheless, it was decided to narrow the discussion to cases where a specific strategy (or a specific realization of that strategy) was used by at least 10% of the subjects (native speakers or learners) in completing a specific item. This analysis yielded the following cases of interaction between pragmatic and linguistic competence and L2 acquisition processes:

a) Successful transfer of shared strategies

If a conventional procedure and its realization is similar inthe first and the second language, learners will acquire it eaily and will use it in some contexts in appropriate ways. The shared request strategies identified inthe data were:

1) Imperatives

Since imperatives are the most direct and transparent request strategy available, they are acquired easily by L2 learners. Imperatives were used appropriately and effectively by learners in two cases: in formulating the policeman's request for the car to be moved (D2, HL2, 57%, table 1) and in formulating the girl's wish to be left alone (D8, HL2, 21%). The use of imperatives

by learners in D2 conforms to both L1 and L2 native usage, while its use in D2 conforms only to L2 native usage.

2) Ability questions

Ability questions ('Can you do X?) are similar across Hebrew and English in both procedure and linguistic realization. It is therefore not surprising to find that learners have no difficulty in acquiring the use of "Can you" as an indirect form of request in Hebrew. Whether the use of this form by learners in Hebrew is taken as evidence of transfer, or as evidence for ease-of-learning due to similarity to mother tongue form is open to speculation. In any case, the appearance of this and other indirect forms of requests in the interlanguage of Hebrew L2 learners indicates that some kind of pragmatic competence is being transferred to the target language. Ability questions were used extensively by both Hebrew L1 speakers and learners in D3. (see table 1).

D3 (15) Ulay ata yaxol lehalvot li et hakesef? (HL1)
(Perhaps you can lend me the money)
(16) Ata yaxal lehalvot li et hakesef?
(Can you lend me the money?) (HL2)
(17) Could you lend it to me? (EL1)

As will be shown, the use of this strategy by learners was not always pragmatically appropriate. However, it is important to note that the form seems to be well established in the interlanguage of Hebrew L2 speakers. In two of the oral interview tasks taped in the pilot study, for example, 'Can you' questions consisted 60% of all request forms used by learners.[13)]

3) Why not questions

There are at least two variations of 'why not' questions in English:

(17a) Why not do it?

(17b) Why don't you do it?

Both (17a) and (17b) are linguistically acceptable in Hebrew but only (17b) has-conventionally - the pragmatic force of a request. Hebrew has another colloguial variation to 'why not' questions.

(17c) Lama šelo na'ase/ta'ase zot..?

(Why (that) don't we /you do it?)

The addition of the 'that' form actually marks this form as a request. Learners used appropriately only (17b), which is the shared variation.

D10 18) Lama šelo tixtov mixtav lesavta?

(Why (that) you don't write a letter to Grandma?) (HL1)

19) Lama ata lo kotev lesavta?

(Why don't you write to Grandma?) (HL2)

20) Why don't you write to your Grandmother? (EL1)

Since (20) was the most frequent strategy used by English L1 speakers in this context, (7) it seems that its use by learners indicates transfer.

4) Do you mind if...?

In only one case on the test did learners and native speakers agree (see table 2) on the choice of a request strategy:

D12 (21) Yafria lexa im a'asen?

(Will it bother you if I smoke?) HL1)

(22) Ze mafria lexa im ani m'asen?

(Will it bother you if I smoke?) (HL2)

23) Do you mind if I smoke? (EL1)

The situation depicted in D10 is governed in both Hebrew and English by shared norms of social appropriateness, and allows for a similar range of acceptable directive types. As a result, transfer of form is an effective communication strategy in this case.

b) Overgeneralization of shared strategies

A conventional speech act procedure that is similar in procedure and linguistic realization in both the first and the second language might still differ across languages in (a) its potential illocutionary force and the conventions that govern its use in different circumstances. Learners might tend to overgeneralize the use of shared procedures in both aspects.

b1) Overgeneralization of potential illocutionary force

As mentioned above, 'could you' questions were sometimes used appropriately by learners and sometimes inappropriately. A pragmatically inappropriate use of 'can you' for requests indicates that the learners had overgeneralized the potential illocutionary force of this request strategy.

D17 (24) Ulay telex ata?
(Maybe you'll go?) HL1)

(25) Ata yaxol lalexet?
(Can you go?) (HL2)

(26) Could you go instead? (EL1)

No native speakers of Hebrew formulated the request in this case by using 'can you.' (Most used 'Ulay telex ata? - Maybe you'll go?) In the given context, 'can you' does not carry the pragmatic force of a request. Native speakers of Hebrew agreed with me that a wife asking her husband 'Could you go to the meeting' (in Hebrew) is likely to be interpreted as genuinely seeking information whether he is able to go, only possibly hinting at her wish that he'll go.

b2) Overgeneralization of appropriacy rules

D1 27) Efšar leqabel et hatafrit?
(Is it possible to get the menu?) (HL1)

28) Tavi et hatafrit, bvakaša
(Bring the menu please) (HL2)

29) Could we have the menu, please? (EL1)

The use of a shared strategy-imperatives by learners in this context violates conventions of usage in Hebrew (see section 4.2). Being unfamiliar with the standard conventional form (27) or at least with the appropriacy rules that dictate its choice in various circumstances, the learner reverts to a transparent, shared strategy.

c) Transfer affecting the linguistic realization of shared and non-shared strategies:

1) In cases where a conventional speech-act procedure is realized by different linguistic means in first and 2nd language, learners might tend to attempt performing a speech act by 'borrowing' the linguistic means from the first language.

The learners use of 'willingness' questions shows this point:

D9 30) Ata muxan lehodia lamorim?

(Are you ready (willing) to notify the teachers? HL1)

31) Ata roce lehodia lamorim?

(Do you want to notify the teachers? HL2)

32) Would you do that? (EL1)

The standard, idiomatic request form that requests information about the hearers willingness to do the act is lexicalized in Hebrew by 'muxan'. (31) is an example of learners attempt to realize the 'willingness' procedure by the use of 'roce' (would). The attempt results in a linguistically acceptable but pragmatically inappropriate utterance since 'roce' in Hebrew is not used conventionally in indirect request forms. The tendency to rely on native language speech-act strategies in procedure and realization is also apparent in the way some learners treat Hebrew language specific forms:

(33) * Efšar li leqabel et hatafrit?

(Is it possible for me to get the menu? HL2)

In modern Hebrew 'efšar' questions do not take personal pronouns. Learners attempt to formulate this strategy by adding 'Li' (to me) results in a phrase that echoes English permission directives as used by English L1 speakers in this context. ('Can we have the menu please.?')

d) Simplification and the transfer of training effect.

The choice of speech act realization in interlanguage also manifests a transfer of training effect: Strategies learned first might tend to be used more than others, and in some cases

might be taken as evidence for a general tendency to simplify the system of speech act realization in the target language. The use of 'existential questions' by learners in asking for a loan (D3) clearly indicates the transfer of training effect:

34) Yeš lexa et hakesef lehalvot li?

(Do you have the money to lend me?) (HL2)

Due to its language specific syntactic pecularities, the form 'yeš lexa' (do you have) is extensively drilled in beginners classes of Hebrew. As a result, learners revert to its use as a request strategy in contexts where native speakers prefer a different strategy (see 15 and table 1).

The use of imperatives in D1 (table 1) can also be interpreted as a result of the transfer of training effect. Imperatives are the first request forms taught, and hence, learners will revert to them in cases where they are not aware, or not sure, of the conventional standard form used by native speakers in the given context.

5.0 Summary and conclusions

The basic theoretical claim argued in the paper was stated in section 4.0 as follows:

Comparable speech act strategies across languages might differ on one or more dimensions, such as speech act procedure, linguistic realization, potential pragmatic force and social appropriateness rules. As a result, second language learners might fail to realize their communicative acts in the target language both in terms of social appropriateness and pragmatic effectiveness.

The evidence to support this claim came from a study designed to elicit speech act forms from native speakers of Hebrew, L2 learners of Hebrew and native speakers of English. The results show that L2 learners seem to exploit a general pragmatic competence in realizing their speech acts in the target language, but nevertheless deviate from native usage both in terms of social appropriateness and effectiveness. The best way to summarize these results and to show how they support the basic claim is to consider the effects that the speech act realization of second language learners might have on communication with native speakers. The speech-act realization of L2 learners might deviate from native usage on three levels of acceptability:

a) Social acceptability

In speech act realization as in all communication, in a second language, the usage of learners often violates social acceptability norms in the target language. The findings in this study on this point are consistent with previous discussions of the issue in the 2nd language acquisition literature. (Levenston 1971b). Since the findings relevant to this point have been discussed in detail (section 4.2), it will suffice to recall one example here: the use of imperatives by learners in the restaurant situation. Though pragmatically effective, a direct command in this situation might easily be considered impolite. L2 learners are often recognized as such in all speech communities by their deviations from social acceptability norms in the target language.

b) Linguistic acceptability

Deviations from linguistic acceptability in speech act

realization result in utterances that are perfectly grammatical, but fail to conform to the target language in terms of what is considered an 'idiomatic; speech act realization. Two examples from the data illustrate this point:

(35) Efšar lehodia lamohim?

(Is it possible to notify the teachers?)

In this case the learner omitted the performance verb conventionally used with 'efšar' questions. (Efšar levakeš mimxa la'asot li tova? Is it possible to ask you to do me a favour?') The omission results in a 'non-idiomatic' request form and in a weakening of the force of the utterance as a request. A similar effect is achieved by the replacement of the conventional 'muxan' ('ready') by 'roce' ('want') in learners utterances. (See example 31).

c) Pragmatic acceptability - shifts in illocutionary force

The most serious consequence of deviations from native usage in speech act realization is an unintended shift in the pragmatic force of the utterance. It should be noted that this kind of shift occurred in the data through the use of both linguistically acceptable and linguistically unacceptable utterances.

In cases where the learner uses 'non idiomatic' speech act patterns he might be recognized as a non-native speaker of the language and get a second chance to clarify his meaning, but in cases where the pattern used is idiomatic, the learner might inadvertently fail to convey his intention. Examples (19) (31) fall into the first category of 'non idiomatic' speech act realization, which results in a weakening of the pragmatic force of

the utterance. Another example from the same category is:

36) bvakaša ta'azov oti bimnuxa

(Please leave me alone) (D8)

By placing 'please' at the beginning, as in English instead of at the end of the utterance, the learner produces a probably unintended 'whining' effect which is inappropriate for the circumstances (see D8, Appendix a).

The best example for the second category is the use of 'can you' questions in D17. (Example 25). In the given context, the 'can you' question in Hebrew fails to carry the force of an indirect request. Since 'can you' questions are quite frequent in the interlanguage of L2 speakers whose native tongue is English, it seems reasonable to assume that many misunderstandings between native and non-native speakers can be traced to the non- native speakers' misuse of this strategy.

It should be noticed that violations of social appropriateness rules in the direction of 'less directness' can also cause shifts of pragmatic force.[16] Thus, for example, the female learners who completed D8 (boy/girl encounter) by hints of the kind "I am not interested" might in a real life situation be faced with an unexpected non-compliance due to being 'too mild' for the occasion. Other examples of such possible non-compliance due to violations of social norms are phrases such as 'The car should be moved' ('Larix lehaziz et hamxonit') used by learners in D2, or 'Why not cut your hair' (Lama lo lehistaper) used by learners in D6.

Failure to mark the speech-act can be another source of pragmatic inappropriacy. As discussed in sc. 4.0 learners showed no

indication to mark general hints as did native speakers. Again, it is not hard to imagine a real life situation where lack of marking by a non-native speaker might result in misunderstanding between him andhis native interlocutor.

If we try to fit the results of this study into a more general theory of the development of communicative competence in a second language, we shall have to be able to specify the 'universal' or at least cross-cultural components of communicative competence as manifested by speech act realization, as against the language and culture specific ones. The analysis of some speech-act forms in Hebrew and English presented here suggests that the illocutionary force of speech act forms is tied to both pragmatic considerations, linguistic meaning and social rules of usage. The exact interrelationship between these aspects is far from being resolved; nevertheless, it is quite clear that the way in which interdependence between pragmatic linguistic and social factors is manifested in language varies considerably from one language and culture to another. It follows that we need to know much more about the different manifestations in various languages before we can fully predict, or teach the acquisition of communicative competence in a second language.

The findings in this study suggest that certain aspects of communicative competence are, in fact, transferred to the task of learning a second language but that this transfer is not sufficient to ensure successful communication. The native speaker knows, in his first language, the linguistic alternatives available for achieving communicative ends and the

systematic relationship between those alternatives and features of the social context. Faced with the tast of learning a second language he expects to find equivalent direct and indirect means for conveying his intentions, governed by a familiar system of social norms. Once he acquires a certain level of linguistic competence, the learner will presumably try to activate some kind of functional competence in achieving his communicative ends. The pragmatic, non-linguistic component of this competence will enable him to relate linguistic information to situational-context and to accept the existence of direct and indirect means in the target language. Nevertheless, the complex nature of the interdependence between pragmatic linguistic and social factors in the target language will often prevent him from getting his meaning across.

The theoretical issue of 'universal' versus 'non-universal' components of communicative competence are far from being resolved by the findings reported here. Nevertheless, it is quite clear that as long as we do not know more about the ways in which communicative functions are being achieved in different languages, L2 learners will often fail to achieve their communicative ends in the target language and neither they nor their teachers will really understand why.

Footnotes

1. For a broader discussion of the issues involved in speech acts and second language learning see Schmidt and Richards (1980,). The aspects discussed in this section are those found relevant to the analysis of the data. (See sections 4.1, 4.2, 4.3)

2. Degree of acceptability in this context is defined as equivalent to frequency of use - the most frequenly chosen forms in any given context can be considered as those judged to be the most acceptable for that context. (see section 4.2 for further discussion on this point)

3. 'Will' in English can refer to either 'volition, or future' (Labov and Fanshel, 1977, 85). Hebrew has no equivalent modal which carries both functions. 'Volition' is expressed lexically by the verb (roce-want) and 'future' morphologically by the verb-form.

4. See Schmidt and Richards (1980) for a similar view.

5. A pilot-study was conducted with 19 adult learners of Hebrew at the University of York, Toronto. The results of the pilot study are discussed in Blum-Kulka (1980).

6. The pilot-study also included an oral role-playing task, designed to elicit request forms from both learners and native speakers. The results revealed differences between native speakers and learners on a variety of discourse features to an

extent that invalidated comparison between the two groups on this task.

7. For the concept of 'institutionalized situations' see Greaves (forthcoming in Applied Linguistics); See Tannen 1979a for discussion of the notion of scripts.

8. The variation in the responses for the two additional items (13 and 15) did not lend itself to the same type of categorization as responses to the other items. The range for D15 is presented in table 5 for illustration.

9. My notion of 'pragmatic competence' refers to some of the rules of use, rules of discourse and communication strategies listed under 'sociolinguistic' and 'strategic' competence by Canale and Swain (1980, 31). The term pragmatic competence is needed to refer to those rules of use and communication strategies which are non-language specific, or are conceived as such by second language learners.

10. As has been shown by first language acquisition students, children have from a very early age a rich system of alternations in request forms (both direct andindirect) that is systematically related to social features. (Ervin-Tripp 1977, 188)

11. The cultural setting for the dialogues was changed from the Hebrew to the English version from an Israeli to an American setting.

12. For further discussion on processes of simplification, see Levenston and Blum 1977, Blum and Levenson 1978.

13. Patrick Allen pointed out to me (personal communication) that in English 'perhaps' can aggravate requests. 'Perhaps

you could leave me alone?' (with stress on 'perhaps'). The difference between English and Hebrew is that while in English the sentence is ironic (by being pseudo-polite) in Hebrew it is not.

14. Similar cross-cultural differences in regard to directness have been found by Tannen (1979b). Tannen found that in expressing their wishes, Greeks tend to be much less direct than Americans.

15. This finding is consistent with Martha Papos' (1980). findings. Papo studied the role of politeness in theproduction of requests by Hebrew L1 and L2 speakers. She found an overwhelming use of 'can' by Hebrew L2 speakers.

16. The following story further illustrates this point: An Israeli boy (aged 14) was told by his mother - in Hebrew - to comply with the shopkeeper's request and stop touching each precious object inthe antique shop in Toronto they were visiting. The boy retorted by saying 'She did not tell me to stop. She just suggested 'please don't touch.'

Apparently the boy inadvertently (or maybe by choice) interpreted the English phrase according to Hebrew rules of request.

Table 1. Distribution of directive types in 9 items

(in percentages)

Item →	D1		D2		D3		D6		D7		D8		D9		D17		D10	
Directive Type	N n=29	L n=30	N n=30	L n=31	N n=31	L n=43	N n=32	L n=42	N n=31	L n=34	N n=32	L n=43	N n=32	L n=41	N n=29	L n=36	N n=32	L n=42
1. Imperatives ('do it')	10	42	78	51	0	0	6	17	0	0	47	21	0	10	0	0	22	17
2. Willingness questions ('Are you ready to do it?')	0	0	0	0	13	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	63	19	10	17	0	17
3. Ability questions ('Can you do it?')	0	0	0	0	66	43	0	0	17	33	0	0	16	10	0	41	0	9
4. Existential questions ('Do you have...?')	0	0	0	0	13	28	0	0	10	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
5. Question Directives (Will you/are you going to do it?)	0	0	0	0	0	0	16	0	7	0	19	0	16	49	79	30	75	14
6. Why not questions ('Why not do it?')	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	7	0	0	36
7. Obligation statements (You have to do it)	0	0	16	25	0	0	75	52	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	7
8. Permission Directives ('Is it possible...?')	76	36	0	0	6	16	0	0	57	33	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
9. Hints	0	0	6	12	0	0	0	14	10	27	34	79	0	0	0	0	0	0
10. Other	10	22	0	12	3	14	3	17	0	1	0	0	6	12	3	11	3	0

n= Native
l= Learners

Notes to Table 1

1. A chi-square analysis was performed on the data for each item seperately; the distributions were all statistically significant. Only responses that conformed to the expected speech-act (in intended function, not form) were considered 'appropriate' and were included in this analysis, hence, 'n' represents the number of appropriate answers for each item.

2. Notice that the items included range from those in which the directive form has the function of a command (D2) to those in which the same form functions as a suggestion (D11).

3. Except 8, all categories mentioned have been previously discussed in speech-act literature (Searle 1975, Ervin Tripp 1977, Labov & Fanshel 1977, Fraser 1975). All forms listed fulfill Searle's essential condition: given the appropriate pragmatic conditions, they can count as directives. The taxonomy presented here is based on the analysis of the Hebrew forms that appeared in the native speakers data. For a more detailed comparative analysis (Hebrew-English) see Blum-Kulka (1980). The examples (in brackets) are literal translations from Hebrew.

4. Since Hebrew has no equivalent to the English modal 'will' the translation here can not be accurate. Question directives in Hebrew are conventionally realized with an initial 'perhaps'.

5. In D6, most native speakers used the phrase "its time you got a haircut" (Higia hazman še..). It was decided to categorize this phrase as an obligation statement because of its function in the context, though it could have been categorized as

a 'time referent' hint. (See Labov & Fanshel 1977, 83).

6. This row includes: a) forms included in the table that were used by less than 5% of the subjects in each group, b) other low-frequency forms used by less than 5% of subjects.

Table 2: Distribution of marked and unmarked responses for 3 items.

	D14[1]		D4[2]		D5[3]	
	Israelis n=32	Learners n=39	Israelis n=32	Learners n=35	Natives n=31	Learners n=44
Marked	3	18	43	14	63	14
Unmarked	97	82	53	86	37	86
Other	0	0	4	0	0	0

Notes:

1) A chi-square analysis performed on this data showed all distributions as statistically significant.

2) 'Marked' in the context of D14 means "a politeness marker." (Could you tell me please...)

3) 'Marked' in D4 includes: a) marking the question (are you going by any chance...) b) referring directly to request content ('could we come with you')

4) 'Marked" in D5 includes a) responses which marked a 'why' question as a challenge, b) direct challenges.

Table 3: Distribution of responses for D": (1)
Making a suggestion to a friend.

	Natives	Learners
	n=30	n=32
	%	%
Imperatives 'Go and speak to him'	13	34
Obligation statements 'You should speak to him'	72	56
Recommendations (2) 'Kday lexa - its worthwhile for you to speak to him	10	0
Other	5	10

(1) The distribution is statistically significant

(2) Note that learners did not use the Hebrew specific 'kday lexa' form.

Table 4: Distribution of responses for D12; Asking permission to smoke

	Natives n=26 %	Learners n=25 %
Hypotetical 'Do you mind if... or will it bother you if'	81	92
Other	19	8

Table 5: Distribution of responses for D15:
Wife suggesting to her husband to visit a sick friend (1)

	D15	
	Natives n=29	Learners n=39
Imperatives 'Go and see him'	0	8
Obligation statements 'You should go...	10	52
Recommendations It is worthwhile ... (Kday)	20	0
Question directives 'Maybe you'll go out...	17	0
Hints He keeps asking about you	24	32
Reproach 'Its not very nice that'	14	0
Why not Why don't you go and see him..	10	6
Other	5	3

(1) The range of forms used by native speakers indicates that this is not considered an 'institutionalized' situation.

Notice that in this case native speakers use a larger variety of forms than learners.

TABLE 6

Distribution of request strategies in 9 items
(only appropriate answers)

	Native Speakers n = 225		Learners n = 189	
		%		%
Imperatives	42	19	32	17
Permission directives	34	15	18	10
Ability questions	25	11	26	14
Question Directives	56	25	25	13
Existential questions	16	7	25	13
Willingness questions	23	10	16	8
Why not questions	2	1	7	4
Desire statements	0	0	5	3
Obligation statements	21	9	23	12
Hints	6	3	31	16

Notes to Table 6

1. Note that the strategy most frequently used by native speakers was question directives (a language specific indirect strategy) and the one most frequently used by learners is imperatives (a non-language specific direct strategy).

2. The relatively high frequency of hints in the learners use is probably due to the trend of less-directness. (see section 4.2).

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